

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EINV, EMIN, CT

SUBJECT: SCED/GOCAR DISPUTE

REF: BANGUI 0171 (NOTAL)

1. LOCAR OCCUPATION OF DDI/SCED OFFICES CONTINUED FOR SIXTH CONSECUTIVE DAY FEBRUARY 3. INSPECTION OF ALL RECORDS BY SUPREME COURT PRESIDENT AND STATE COMPTROLLER GENERAL HAS NOW SHIFTED FROM DDI TO ADJOINING SCED HEADQUARTERS. CUTTING FACTORY (CND) REMAINS OPEN.

2. DIRECTOR OELBAUM, WITH WHOM EMBASSY MAINTAINING DISCRETE BUT CLOSE DAILY CONTACT, NOW STATES THAT CONTRARY TO HIS INITIAL IMPRESSIONS TIME SCED BANK ACCOUNT WITH UBAC HAS NOT BEEN BLOCKED AS YET.

3. OELBAUM AND ALL OTHER DISCUSSED PERSONNEL BEGINNING FEBRUARY 2 NO LONGER GOING TO THEIR OFFICES AS THEY ARE NOT ALLOWED TO WORK OR TO USE THEIR RADIOS TO DISCUSS SITUATION AT SCED OPERATIONS IN PROVINCIAL CAR. ON FEBRUARY 2, OELBAUM ASKED SUPREME COURT PRESIDENT WHETHER THE DDI OFFICE AS IT HAD ALREADY BEEN INSPECTED MIGHT NOT BE PERMITTED TO RE-OPEN. TO HIS
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SURPRISE, RATHER THAN BEING TOLD FLATLY NO HE WAS INFORMED

THAT THE SUPREME COURT PRESIDENT WOULD POSE HIS QUESTION TO THE APPROPRIATE OFFICIAL AND LET HIM KNOW LATER.

4. TELBAUM SAID THAT HE WAS ALSO WARMLY RECEIVED BY MINES MINISTER TCHEOUTI ON FEBRUARY 2 IN CONNECTION WITH A GO SLOW STRIKE BY DDI'S NINETY EMPLOYEES AT ITS NATIONAL DIAMOND CUTTING FACTORY (CND) AT BANGU. (THE STRIKE INCIDENTALLY IS UNRELATED TO SCED/GOCAR DIFFICULTIES, AND TCHEOUTI ASSURED OELBAUM HE WOULD RESOLVE IT.)

5. ALTHOUGH FRENCH EMBASSY COMMUNITY AND EXPATRIOTE BANKERS APPEAR TO BELIEVE SCED WILL ULTIMATELY BE NATIONALIZED OELBAUM DOES NOT. HE THINKS THAT GOCAR WISHES AVOID COMPENSATION QUESTION AND THAT THEY WILL INSTEAD IMPOSE A BACKBREAKING RETROACTIVE TAX OR TRUMP UP CLAIM FOR BACK TAXES WHOSE PAYMENT WOULD MEAN FINANCIAL RUIN.

6. IN MEANTIME EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED INDIRECT REPORTS FROM CARNOT-BERBARATI AREA, CENTER OF SCED ACTIVITY, THAT SIMILAR OCCUPATION OF SCED OPERATIONS TAKING PLACE THERE. WE UNDERSTAND THAT EXECUTION OF SEARCH ORDER TAKING PLACE IN ORDERLY, POLITE FASHION MUCH AS IN BANGUI. SOLE EXCEPTION IS THAT SCED DEPUTY DIRECTOR THERE THOUGHT TO BE UNDER SOME SORT OF HOUSE ARREST FOR PERIOD OF INVESTIGATION. WHILE DDI/SCED PRESIDENT ALBERT JOLIS WOULD LIKE HIM TO LEAVE CAR, JOLIS'S ON PAUL STILL AT CARNOT AND NOT LIKELY BE ABLE LEAVE BEFORE PRESENT STANDOFF RESOLVED.

7. UPON RETURN OF PRESIDENT BOKASSA TO CAR AFTERNOON FEBRUARY 1 FROM DAY STAY WITH PRESIDENT MOBUTU IN KISANGANI AND BA DAKA AREAS OF ZAIRE, HIS PERSONAL PHYSICIAN GEORGES PINERAL ANNOUNCED ON NATIONAL RADIO THAT BECAUSE OF J "TRAUMATISM OF ONE TOE" SUFFERED NEAR END OF ZAIRE VISIT, HE WAS CONFINING PRESIDENT BOKASSA TO TEN DAYS OF "ABSOLUTE REPOSE". OELBAUM BELIEVES THAT THIS IS CLASSICAL "DIPLOMATIC ILLNESS". HOWEVER, OELBAUM CONSIDERS THIS POSSIBLY A POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT WHICH MIGHT INDICATE THAT GOCAR HAS FAILED TO DATE TO FIND EVIDENCE OF TRAFFICKING OR OTHER SERIOUS INFRACTION ON BASIS OF WHICH SCED MIGHT LEGITIMATELY BE CLOSED DOWN. THUS, BOKASSA HE FEELS IS STALLING FOR TIME.

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